Agro-Based Jute and Cotton Units

*160. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government plan to protect the employment oriented agro-based jute and cotton industries from Multi National Companies, to avoid their closure and final reduction in employment of thousands of workers;

(b) whether Government are aware that most of the agro-based jute and cotton units are making heavy losses; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to revive them?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) No threat is perceived from the Multi National Companies to the employment oriented Agro based jute and cotton industries.

(b) Out of the 73 jute mills in the country, two jute mills are lying closed. Four mills are incorporated outside the country and turned into sick units. Out of the balance 67 jute mills, 34 jute mills and *referred* to Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) as per the existing statute except the units incorporated outside the country.

As on 31.3.99 there were total 1791 mills in cotton/man made sector. Out of this 328 cotton/man made fibre mills (225 spinning and 103 composite) were closed as on 31.10.99.

It would not be correct to say that most of the mills are making heavy losses.

(c) the Government has taken various measures for revival and modernisation of Textile and jute mills and has recently launched the Technological Upgradation Fund Scheme. This is addition to the following schemes which have been launched earlier: (1) Special Jute Development Fund Programme (2) Jute Modernisation Fund Scheme (3) UNDP Aided Development Projects (4) Market Assistance Scheme through JMDC (5) Constitution of National Centre for Jute Diversification. Government is also in the procesass of finalising a Cotton Technology Mission for addressing the problems of the cotton sector.